18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

HE PUT THE GARRISON INTO THE

grass hut, as the *murabba'a* was occupied by a woman who had been bitten by a snake and the Sheikh asked us not to disturb her: it was part of her treatment that she should not be seen. A thin trail of ash had been sprinkled round the building to keep other snakes away.

During the day we collected other 'Abdulla bin 'Aun who came and watched us from a distance in little groups. Somehow they seemed to be fascinated by us, for although they would not come when we shouted to them, they made no attempt to move or to resist when we walked over to them and told them to come along with us. Few of them were armed, and neither were we until the garrison came along. There were a couple of wells in commission, and I was told that at one time there had been as many as eighty-one. Some of the Badawin showed us on the wall of a cliff little columns of holes bored in soft stone. You counted up the holes and then stepping that number of paces from the column found yourself on a buried well.

Having explored the neighbourhood of the fort we went to see the site for a landing-ground which had been previously decided on from the air. Unfortunately it had to be at some little distance from the fort—2 or 3 miles—but it was a marvellous landing-ground and greatly pleased the Royal Air Force when they came along later in the day and flew Seiyid Bubekr and myself back to Seiyun.

On later visits I had the opportunity of seeing all the surrounding country from the air, and I was struck by the truth of the saying that Al 'Abr is the "Key of the Hadhramaut," for behind the mountains tracks radiated out in all directions to Nejran, the Yemen, and Shabwa and the Western Aden Protectorate. From Al 'Abr eastwards there was only the one track. I have visited Al 'Abr five times on the ground and passed over it many times by air, and on each occasion I have been struck by the large number of caravans which halt there for water. For a week or two after our occupation there was some falling off, as the Badawin were not certain of our intentions, but now it seems that far more come than before; they have a sense of security which was previously lacking when the Al 'Abdulla bin 'Aun were constantly looting them. My own belief, which is shared by responsible opinion in the Hadhramaut, is that before long a town will spring up there, as it forms an ideal place for a market and there is plenty of good water. The wells are not much more than 20 feet deep, cut through the soft limestone, and as soon as you draw the water out it runs in again in such a way as to give you the impression that there must be an underground river. On the first visit I took there a party of skilled builders from Tarim and they set to work at once to rebuild the fort. They also opened another well or two, and if we can find the money we shall open more, for these increased facilities are much appreciated by the Badawin.

Amongst the visitors who come are a large number of women. Thereabouts they are unveiled and talk fearlessly and freely with you. I found these girls very charming and full of courage. They thought nothing of journeys alone with camels across the desert, from the Jof for instance, and it is the women throughout the Hadhramaut who appreciate the peace more than any one. They have often said that in the old days they always lived in fear that when their menfolk parted from them they might not see them again.

21: Thomas T-5 (no date) 1932. MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

302 Women, according to a visitor from that locality, have no special hair customs in Hadhramaut other than shaving round the temple to show as wide an expanse of forehead as possible.

EXORCISM, SPIRITS, JINNS, SACRIFICES.[1]

[771] The mountaineers, although normally belonging to the *Shafi* sect of Islam, are full of pagan
754 cults which excite the ire of the orthodox Moslem visitor. I have already in my paper under
755 reference explained the details of Ra'aba Hamra spirit exorcism and snake-bite cure—the
● 752 imprecations in the Shahara tongue of the mountains, the raising and lowering of bodies, the spitting on the wound. At Shisur I noticed that the proceedings were terminated by a rifle fired into the air. That, however, is the procedure for the "Evil Eye," so here this bravery was dispensed with. The cure did not work, however, and was followed by another next day. This, called Habil, was a kind of divination and propitiation. The practitioner, rope in hand, sat about three paces from his patient. A third party was called to hold the end of the rope. Taking an arbitrary length of it with the thumb and forefinger of one hand, the practitioner measured the outstretched length of it with his disengaged arm by means of forearm's length, hand span and finger breadth. The operation he repeated three times, each occasion preceded by a pause to bend his head low over the rope and shake his head, making a curious burbling noise with his lips, and to take a handful of sand which he sprinkled up and down the rope. In conclusion he looked up at his patient and gave him the following remedy: "at sunset take so many dates and so much *samn* (butter) and go and cast it away upon the sands."

754 These mountain tribes are much afraid of the Evil Eye, not only for themselves, but equally
755 for their flocks and herds. The ceasing of lactation is invariably ascribed to *Ain Balis*. The cure is frankincense. I witnessed the ceremony on occasion and made a cinema film of it, though it is usually performed at sunrise or at sunset. The incense burner was brought and wood introduced and lighted. The practitioner, the cow-owner, broke a fragment of frankincense about the size of a walnut into three pieces. Then spitting upon it three times he introduced it into the burner. While two other witnesses held the afflicted animal by head and leg [illegible]ely, he waved about its head the burning frankincense, chanting a set sacrificial chant.

782 For human sickness a cow or a sheep is sacrificed, the blood being sprinkled over the patient's shoulders and breasts when the sun is high overhead; the animal must be female. For sacrifices at human deaths, male and female animals are alike held virtuous.

753 A Sayid met me in the mountains and asked me whether I knew of anything to pacify
776 *Afarit*. His wife had had a series of miscarriages. *Afarit* were the cause. There are many evil spirits—*Afarit*, *jinns*, *jinnyat* and *Zars*. *Zars*[2] are the most accommodating, *jinns* sometimes yield, but *Afarit*—they are Allah's worst affliction.

782 The sacrifice of animals in case of death varies with the importance and wealth of the
556 deceased. In small and average estates one half of his cows are sacrificed. In big estates

[1] Detailed descriptions will be found in my *Arabia Felix* (Jonathan Cape, 1932).

[2] A detailed description of the "Zar" cult as practised in Oman is given in my *Alarms and Excursions in Arabia* (Allen and Unwin, 1931).

Plants. The shrub, *Catha edulis*, colloquially known as *qat*, is extensively cultivated in sections of the western highlands. The leaves yield a stimulant which dissipates fatigue and causes loss of appetite and of desire for sleep. Qat chewing is a popular custom in the Colony and Western Aden Protectorate, as it is in Yemen.

Cases of poisoning, caused by the contamination of imported wheat with grains of *Lolium temulentum* (Darnel grass), are recorded frequently. Species of *Euphorbia* grow in many areas, and contact poisoning is sometimes observed.

Food Sanitation

Regulations governing the sanitary quality of milk, meats and other products are in force only in the Colony. The markets and the slaughterhouses, which are located at four points—in Crater, Tawahi and Maala, on the peninsula, and in Sheikh Othman—are operated under the supervision of sanitary inspectors. Eating houses, coffee shops, date stalls and other premises where foods are prepared or sold, and the aerated water and ice factories, are licensed and inspected from time to time. No controls are exercised over food handlers, however, and many food vendors and workers in small shops are immigants among whom the standards of cleanliness are generally poor.

Meat animals are inspected by veterinary officers at the slaughterhouses, but no postmortem examinations of the carcasses are made. The dairy cows are housed in municipal or private sheds within the town limits. Samples of milk from commercial herds are collected at regular intervals and tested for adulteration. There are no facilities for pasteurization. Opportunities for the spread of infection through contaminated milk are minimal, however, due to the universal custom of boiling milk before it is used. Brucellosis is enzootic among the goats, and infections undoubtedly are transmitted to man occasionally through cheese and other milk products. Bovine tuberculosis is pres-